

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7532

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T SANA 0788

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, YE, UR

SUBJECT: YAR COMMAND COUNCIL MEMBER ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM AND SOVIETS

1. AHMED ABDO SAID SAID ON 2 MARCH THAT SOVIETS ARE CLEARLY "CONFUSED AND DISTURBED" ABOUT WHETHER YEMENIS ARE "PLAYING A DOUBLE GAME." THAT WAS WHY THEY REMOVED MIG-21'S.

2. EMBOFF SAID MIG'S ARE STILL SITTING ON SOVIET SHIP IN ADEN HARBOR. SOVIET MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC OFFICERS ARE TELLING YEMENI CONTACTS -- AND SOME IN U.S. EMBASSY -- THAT MODERN EQUIPMENT (SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING MIG'S) IS ON THE WAY. ANOTHER SHIP MAY ARRIVE SHORTLY FROM USSR. FINALLY, DESPITE WHAT GHASHMI SAYS IN PUBLIC ABOUT USSR, SOVIETS APPEAR CONFIDENT THEY HAVE SOME POWERFUL FRIENDS IN YAR INCLUDING PARATROOP COMMANDER ABDALLAH ABDAL-ALIM.

3. SAID SAID YEMEN MIGHT GET ANOTHER SHIP BUT THAT "ONLY MORE OLD STUFF" WOULD BE UNLOADED. AS FOR ABDAL-ALIM, SAID SAID HE WAS "ASSIGNED" TO SOVIETS AND DOES A GOOD JOB AT MAKING THEM FEEL GOOD. THAT'S WHAT HAMDI WANTS HIM TO DO, SAID SAID. "HE'S FROM TAIZ AREA, LIKE ME," SAID SAID, "AND I KNOW HIM VERY WELL." ABDAL ALIM WOULDN'T DEVIATE

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"A HAIR" FORM WHAT HAMDI WANTS AND TELLS HIM TO DO.

ONLY HANDI'S BROTHER, ABDALLAH HAMDI, COMMANDER OF POWERFUL AMALIQA REGIMENT, IS CLOSER TO PRESIDENT THAN ABDALLAH ABD AL-ALIM.

COMMENT: ASSUME SAID IS "ASSIGNED" TO US. IT IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF "MAN IN THE MIDDLE" ROLE WHICH HAMDI APPARENTLY HAS ADOPTED. HE WOULD LIKE TORHLY BOTH SIDES (SAUDIS, SOVITS) OFF AGAINST EACH, RETAIN LARGE ROLE FOR EACH. ASSUME BOTH SIDES CAN BE COUNTED ON TOWANT TO MAKE THIS HARD TO DO. WE WOULD STILL BE WILLING PUT OUR BETS ON SAUDIS.
RANSOM

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